



Romania

How difficult is it to achieve 'top of mind' in the consumers' mind?

People make choices regarding the brands they buy, consume, offer or recommend to others every day or almost every day. Producers and retailers strive to be as 'present' as possible in consumer preferences, to occupy first place in their minds and in the choices they make. However, in addition to the battle between direct competitors in the same category or substitutable categories, there is an interaction between all the products and services people consume or use. GfK Romania has tried to find out how 'busy' the consumers' mind is with brands.

We compared the brands' performance indicators for more than 25 fast moving consumer goods categories investigated in 2009 and found that the average top of mind awareness is 44%. However, in half of the categories, including deodorants, shampoo and cold cuts, the most salient brand is mentioned spontaneously by less than one third of the consumers of that category. Amongst the categories with a very strong brand in terms of top of mind awareness (over 50%) are coffee, toothpaste and feminine pads.

Even if the performances of brands on a market are closely related to the characteristics of that market – age of the market, its tradition, the number of competitors - an overview may be helpful to understand the complexity of the consumers' lives, the enormous amount of information to which they are exposed and how they adapt over time to these factors. By cumulating data from the categories mentioned above, we found that a consumer has spontaneous recall of, on average, 2.5 brands, whilst the aided-awareness test shows that a consumer knows, on average, 7 brands in a category.

The awareness is the first step, in fact the essential step, for building a brand, but this step alone is not sufficient to ensure a successful brand. Persuading the customer to try the product is the touchstone which must follow on! The shelf performance in-store and promotional activities are the components which must be included in this equation. The same aggregate data show that in the context of a trial over a year, only slightly more than one third of those who know each brand of fast moving consumer goods also consumes it.

Further monitoring the performance of a brand across the purchase funnel based on a continuous feedback from the consumers is crucial to ensure success in this crowded environment.

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